

Territory's Schools and Vocational Training Subject of Report to Chamber of Commerce

A more elastic compulsory school attendance law, including training in vocational schools; a stricter truancy law, the establishment of an agricultural high school connected with the College of Hawaii—these are some of the recommendations made by the Chamber of Commerce committee on public schools and vocational training. The report will be presented at a meeting next Monday.

Among the subordinate recommendations are for the donation by the Chamber of Commerce of two scholarships of \$100 each for the College of Hawaii, granting of the requests made in the estimates of the needs of the schools in Honolulu, and the transfer from county to territorial jurisdiction of all expenditure for furniture and fixtures in the public schools.

The report is signed by R. B. Booth, chairman; H. M. von Volt, R. M. Trent and Edgar Wood. It follows in full:

Honolulu, Hawaii, March 9, 1915.

Hon. George R. Carter,
President Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu,
Honolulu, Hawaii.

Dear Sir:—Your Committee on Public Schools and Vocational Training have undertaken study on various subjects and have to report as follows:

(1) A MORE ELASTIC COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW.

For the reason that education is going on all of the time, either that of the street, or that of the schools, the one for evil and the other for good, the chance for evil should be lessened and the opportunity for good should be increased. The future good citizenship of the Territory requires this and its importance cannot be too strongly urged. We, therefore, believe it to be a step in the right direction to **RECOMMEND**, That The Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu ask the Legislature, now in session, to enact amendments to the present compulsory school attendance law, making it more elastic in its operation. We suggest for its attention a law that shall provide as follows:

The attendance of all children from six to thirteen years of age, or until they have completed the work of the sixth grade at either a public or private school, is obligatory, and it shall be incumbent upon all parents, guardians and others having the responsibility and care of children of such ages to send them to such school.

The certificate issued by the Department of Public Instruction showing that the child has completed the sixth grade shall constitute a working permit (or permit to work).

It is provided, however, that all children living within four miles of an advanced vocational school between the ages of thirteen and eighteen must attend school unless suitably employed.

And it is further provided that such attendance shall not be compulsory in the following cases:

First.—When the distance to the nearest school exceeds four miles and no suitable transportation is provided.

Second.—When such child shall be physically or mentally unable to attend school, of which the certificate of a duly licensed physician shall be sufficient evidence.

Third.—When a competent person is employed as tutor in the family wherein such child resides and proper instruction is imparted.

(2) TRUANCY.

We believe that the present law relative to Truancy should be strengthened, so that in addition to the present requirements where enforcement depends on written complaints of teachers, the police may of their own motion, in cases of flagrant truancy character, be empowered and instructed by law to take necessary action.

WE RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, that The Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu favorably commend to the attention of the Legislature the enactment of an amendment to the Truancy Law that shall in effect be as follows:

The same Police authorities, as designated in Section 213-A, Act 120, of Session Laws of 1907, shall, also, of their own motion see to it that all children of school age shall attend some school.

It should be stated that this change was suggested through the experience of the Department of Public Instruction, and is in line with what its Superintendent recommends.

Also, it should be noted that the first recommendation of your Committee, as above, relative to a more elastic compulsory attendance law meets the approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

(3) PUBLIC SCHOOL EXPENSES CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU.

Through the kindness of Mr. C. H. Cooke your Committee obtained a full copy of the estimated budget of public school expenses for the City and County of Honolulu, as follows:

High School.....	Four room building.....	\$ 3,500
Kamehameha.....	One room.....	750
Waiahole.....	One room.....	750
Kaunakakai.....	One room.....	750
Kahuku.....	One bungalow.....	600
Kawailoa.....	One bungalow.....	600
Wailua.....	Two bungalows.....	1,200
Wahiawa.....	One bungalow.....	600
Ewa.....	Two bungalows.....	1,200
Waipahu.....	Two bungalows.....	1,200
Aiea.....	One bungalow.....	600
Kalihi-nui.....	One bungalow.....	600
Honolulu District.....	Sixteen bungalows.....	9,600
Kaahumanu.....	12 room concrete building.....	30,000
Central Grammar.....	12 room concrete building.....	30,000
Total.....		\$81,950

New Buildings.....	\$81,950
Repairs and Maintenance.....	35,000
Furniture and Fixtures.....	15,000
Janitor's Service and Supplies.....	28,000
Total.....	\$159,950

Your Committee considered it advisable to enquire into the budget of estimated expenditure, both as to its composition as a whole and with reference to the need of a 12 room concrete building at the Kaahumanu location in particular. In regard to the former, Mr. Henry W. Kinney, Superintendent of Public Instruction, wrote us, on the 5th inst, as follows:

The estimates were based on figures compiled from

actual observation by myself of the needs of each school, and after consultation with commissioners, supervising principals, teachers, county supervisors, and others interested. In the case of Honolulu, the figures were based on the assumption that the increase here will be about 1000 a year, or 2000 for the biennial period. When the schools opened, last September the Oahu attendance had increased by 1135 above the figures of only three months previous.

We have asked for 2 twelve-room buildings, to be located at the largest school centers, and for 16 bungalows. That makes a total of 40 rooms. These will have to take 50 pupils each if they are to accommodate the increase of 2000. If the estimate is wrong, it errs by being too small.

In regard to the need of an additional building at the Kaahumanu schools, we submit letter of Mr. Charles W. Baldwin, written on the 3rd inst. in reply to our inquiry, as follows:

Mr. R. B. Booth, Chairman, Public Schools
Vocational Education Committee,
Chamber of Commerce,

Dear Sir:—As I understand the Chamber of Commerce has been asked to pass on the proposed school appropriations for the coming biennial period, in which an item of \$30,000 appears for a 12 room addition at the Kaahumanu School, I should like to present the following as justifying the proposed expenditure.

Kaahumanu is the only grammar school located in a very large district,—the Moiliili, Waikiki, Manoa and Pohukaina (in part) being feeders to this school.

Since I have been at the Kaahumanu School (six years) the accommodations have never been adequate. At first I adopted the plan of sending away the six year old children, trusting that some of them would find places in other schools, and that we could later overcome the handicap with the balance; but the scheme did not work out this way when they continually came back to us seven years old. Therefore, last September I deemed it necessary to change the policy in order to protect the interests of this school, so pupils were refused for the higher grades. In this way practically all pupils were refused for the 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th and 4th grades. The only exceptions were when two Maconber girls who live within a block of the school were received in the 8th grade, and a few Waikiki pupils in the 4th grade.

Unless additional room is provided next September it will be impossible for us to accommodate our 2nd and 3rd grade pupils unless we refuse to receive 1st grade pupils, at the same time, or course, we shall be compelled to refuse pupils for the higher grades as we did last year.

I recognize the fact that our refusal to take pupils in the higher grades makes trouble for the other schools, but with 59 enrolled in one room in the 7th grade and 54 in the 8th grade, teaching conditions are impossible.

In case a new 12 room addition were opened at the Kaahumanu School next September 11 rooms would immediately be occupied with the following classes: assembly hall class, veranda class, 2 classes in old building yard, 2 bungalow classes (bungalows to be used for shop and kitchen) and additional classes in the 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

I might say here that the old buildings in the yard which are being used for school rooms, kitchen and shop are all beyond repair, one of them being in a disreputable condition.

At present we have 212 pupils enrolled in the 1st grade. A 1st grade enrollment of 212, with the feeders to the school as before stated, should work out to a total enrollment of between 1100 and 1200 pupils. I can cite the Royal School as a case in point with a first grade enrollment of 180 and a total enrollment of 1100. The Royal School has feeders in the Pauas and Pohukaina Schools.

In closing I would again call attention to the fact that the location of the Kaahumanu School justifies the proposed addition, and further that the congestion at the Royal and Central Grammar Schools should not only be considerably relieved by the addition in question, but that children will thereby be placed in a school to which they properly belong.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) CHARLES W. BALDWIN,
Principal, Kaahumanu School.

Upon the statements made as to the existing needs your Committee became convinced that none too much had been asked through the Budget of Estimates. We believe it should receive the hearty support of the entire community. It appears to us as not a compilation of that which is merely desirable, but is rather a presentation of only that which is necessary, and therefore, we **RECOMMEND** That the Budget of Estimates that has been carefully prepared and submitted by the regular Board of Estimates, as required by Law, as above, be endorsed by and receive the earnest support of the Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu.

(4) TRANSFER TO TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

It having developed during our investigation that it might prove advantageous both to the schools and community if there were a transfer of the full care and expenditure for Furniture and Fixtures of our public schools from City and County to the Territory through its Department of Public Instruction, we made special inquiry of the Superintendent of the Department, to which he, Mr. H. W. Kinney, under date of the 5th made reply, as follows:

Dear Sir:—In reply to your inquiry of March 5th, I beg to state as follows:

My main reason for asking for the transfer of the school furniture and fixtures appropriation to the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Instruction

is the exceedingly great assistance which this step would be in the efforts which we are making to place vocational instruction on a basis of real practical usefulness. I maintain that this work should be self-supporting, as far as the purchase of raw material is concerned; as a matter of fact, it will be impracticable for financial reasons, if it is not.

In order to make this work self-supporting, the vocational instructors have to use much of their time and ingenuity in efforts to secure orders for and to supply salable articles, the manufacture of which is not always of the greatest possible educational value.

The schools can be their own best customers; if the control of the school furniture item is left to the Department of Public Instruction the school carpenter shop will be provided with enough useful work to keep them busy with tasks of educational value. In short, we want to get away from the possibility of having school carpenter shops turning out an endless succession of tabourettes and fern stands, as they are now in some cases compelled to do in a greater or less extent. The school shops can turn out almost every item of school furniture needed in the schools except patent desks. If they are allowed to do it, the Territory will receive these articles more cheaply than they can be purchased, and it will at the same time have provided the vocational training department with a most valuable opportunity.

As the law stands at present, it is illegal for our school shops to make school furniture.

The law provides that a general appropriation can be spent for no purpose for which there is a specific appropriation. There are specific appropriations for school furniture. Therefore we cannot legally buy out of our vocational training fund, which is a general appropriation, raw material for the manufacture of school furniture. We can legally make cubes, balls, fern baskets, etc., but we cannot make our own furniture. This condition should be remedied. Furthermore, in the matter of the purchase of patent desks, it should be remembered that the Department, if it purchases desks for the entire group, can command better terms than when small amounts are dealt in as at present; and it will, without doubt, be able to compel dealers to keep on hand a reasonably large stock, which will do away with the great inconvenience of the present arrangement when pupils often have to sit on boxes or on the floor, waiting while the desks are on their way from distant points on the mainland.

In the same connection, I hope that the legislature will make some arrangement whereby school repairs and the construction of buildings of simple design can be turned over to the students in the cases of schools providing instruction in the mechanical arts. This will save money and give the pupils a valuable opportunity for instruction, leaving the construction and repair of school buildings, otherwise, in the control of the county, as at present.

For further information, I beg to refer you to my report to the Governor and my report to the Senate Hold-Over Committee.

We believe that the experience and observation of Superintendent Kinney in connection with this subject should count for great value, and therefore we

RECOMMEND that the Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu heartily support and urge upon the attention of the Legislature its enactment of such law as will transfer the care of all expenditure for furniture and fixtures of our public schools to the more general Territorial responsibility and supervision through the Department of Public Instruction.

(5) HOLIDAYS.

It having been shown to your Committee through computation made by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mr. Henry W. Kinney, that each school holiday involves the Territory in an expenditure of \$4606.00 from which there is no return, our opinion is that it would be well for the attention of the Legislature to be called to that fact. We believe that the whole matter of "holidays" should be guarded rather carefully, and, in fact, if possible should be decreased, rather than increased. If we are correctly informed our Legislature has power to enact laws pertaining to three of our local election days, and if those three days could be placed on Saturdays it would save an expense of three times \$4606.00 or \$13,818.00, practically \$14,000.00 in all, which we believe is well worth considering. For the reason that another Committee has already presented recommendation to the Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu relative to "Holidays" which the Chamber has passed upon, we do not regard that we are at liberty to recommend anything inconsistent therewith. If, however, it is not too late to reconsider anything that has been previously accepted on this point, we would like, with the consent of the Committee to whom the subject of "Holidays" was referred to suggest and recommend that the saving of the \$13,818.00 above stated be accomplished by the legal placing of our local election days on Saturdays, instead of on school days.

(6) ESTABLISHMENT OF TERRITORIAL AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL.

For the purpose of increasing the usefulness of the College of Hawaii to the community in general, through some plan that will supply ultimately an increasing number of its students, we regard it as eminently advisable and wise to have the matter brought before the Legislature for its best attention. Specifically the reasons for urging the establishment of such a school are stated as follows:

1. There is no school of secondary grade in the Territory giving adequate vocational and industrial training.
2. There is great demand by pupils for Vocational training, and
3. There is great demand by the Territory's industries for more efficient workers.

Your Committee, therefore, **RECOMMENDS**, That the Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu call the attention of the Legislature to the establishment of a Territorial Agricultural High

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